



February 8, 2022

***Sent via Email**

The Honorable Representative Gomez, Chair
Preventing Homelessness Division
529 State Office Building
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: Support for HF 3090

Dear Chair Gomez and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for hearing [HF 3090](#) and for your leadership in authoring the bill. Olmsted County urges support for this legislation to provide funding for emergency shelter facilities. There is significant need across Minnesota to support individuals, youth, and families experiencing homelessness and state investment will help meet these temporary housing needs.

In October 2019, housing partners from across Olmsted County came together with the Corporation for Supportive Housing to develop community strategies to address unsheltered homelessness. In response, the local housing partners collaborated in the development of the Rochester Community Warming Center. The warming center emergency shelter is open during the evening hours with 42 beds available for individuals to have a warm place to sleep, shower, utilize laundry facilities, and receive food each night. Over the past two years, Olmsted County has made significant investments to address unsheltered homelessness in the community.

Since 2020, through partnerships, collaboration, and innovation with local, state, and federal housing programs, Olmsted County has created over 200 units of housing opportunities for its most vulnerable residents. In addition to creating housing options, the county Housing Stability Team of seven social workers was formed to help people find and maintain housing. While these efforts are having an impact, the community also lacks a long-term shelter option.

The current warming center (shelter) was designed to meet an immediate need and was intended as a short-term solution and has now become functionally obsolete. HF 3090 would provide much needed support for efforts to create a long-term plan for shelter, and more importantly, a pathway to stable housing for our most vulnerable residents.

Thank you for your consideration to invest state funding for urgently needed emergency shelter facilities throughout the state. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Thein".

Mark Thein, Chair
Olmsted County Board of Commissioners
thein.mark@co.olmsted.mn.us